

# Air quality, land cost reports go to freeway committee

By Doug Murphy  
Staff Writer

The South Mountain Loop 202 Citizens Advisory Team meets next week to review technical reports involving air quality and the costs to acquire homes and land along the proposed freeway's routes.

The team meets from 5:30 - 9 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Learning Center Hall in the Komatke Community Center at 51st Avenue and St. Johns Road on the Gila River Indian Reservation. Members of the public may attend.

The air quality report is important because health fears, especially for the children who attend schools within a several feet of the proposed freeway, sparked the creation of Protecting Arizona's Resources and Children (PARC), one of the grassroots organizations opposed to the freeway.

And the cost of acquiring homes and land is also significant because construction estimates alone put the freeway's price tag at between \$995 million and \$1.3 billion, depending on the route.

The cost of acquiring land and homes could add another \$250 million depending on the selected corridor.

There is between \$1.1 billion and \$1.3 billion allocated in the Maricopa County Regional



U. Frank Williams Jr./AFN

**This sign at 24th Street and Pecos Road lets residents know about the eastern leg of the proposed South Mountain Freeway.**

Transportation Plan for the freeway's construction.

Next month, the team will be asked to recommend one out of the five possible routes in the West Valley. The routes extend from about the western edge of South Mountain Park to Interstate 10, and lie between 51st Avenue and Loop 101.

The Arizona Department of Transportation wants to narrow the number of possible freeway routes in the West Valley down to one to eliminate uncertainty for developers and homeowners affected by the other proposed routes.

Depending on which western route is recommended, between 120 and 780 homes and lots could be condemned to accommodate the freeway.

In Ahwatukee Foothills, the only identified route for the freeway's eastern leg is the 1988 plan on Pecos Road. Depending on whether the highway is built at or below ground level, as few as 255 homes or as many as 659 could be demolished. A decision on where to build in the Ahwatukee Foothills area won't be decided until the end of this year or early in 2007.

If constructed, the freeway will connect I-10 near Ahwatukee Foothills to I-10 in the West Valley.

Staff writer Doug Murphy can be reached at (480) 898-7914 or [dmurphy@aztrib.com](mailto:dmurphy@aztrib.com).